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### Holy Week.

Holy Week, the week sanctified by our Divine Savior's suffering and death, is again drawing near. It is well for all whom the Church has enlisted in the service of her liturgy, to remember that we are now approaching the climax of the liturgical year. More than ever it is incumbent upon us—priests, choirmasters and singers—to make our participation in the liturgical commemoration of the world's greatest tragedy conformable alike to the letter and spirit of the Church's liturgy. The Church has elaborated the liturgy of Holy Week with wonderful care and completeness. In her liturgical enactment of the Divine Tragedy, in her symbolic representation of the Passion and Death of the Savior, nothing has been left to chance or improvisation. Let us therefore act our parts in this sublime drama in strict compliance with her wishes and directions. Let us not fail her now that she depends upon our co-operation more than at any other time of the year. Who will gainsay that God wishes in a special manner to use the liturgy of Holy Week—dependent upon its worthy performance, of course—as a vehicle of grace to the souls of the faithful. Viewed therefore in their relation to the dispensation God's grace at this holy time, our liturgical duties during Holy Week must impress us with a lively sense of our responsibility for their conscientious fulfillment.

Let us, above all, not shirk the burden of the work of preparation. There is indeed much to prepare and much to meditate; for the liturgy of Holy Week, and especially the tragic trilogy of its last three days, is a masterpiece of liturgical art, whose performance, to be successful, elevating, and grace-dispensing, may assuredly not be approached in a light and careless vein. Can we church musicians not bring to its preparation at least as much zeal, attention, and self-sacrifice as we should bestow upon our preparation for a production of secular mu-

sical art of the first magnitude? There are musicians and singers doing service in our Catholic church choirs who would smile blandly if such a suggestion were made to them. They are of the class to whom the liturgy of the Church is a sealed book—sealed, indeed, yet only because of their own conceit, worldliness, and general aversion to religious reflection of any kind. Their thoughts at this time are not of the music of Holy Week, but only of a blatant festival Mass that is to be performed on Easter Sunday. It is not to such as these that these lines are addressed. But the other church musicians and singers who are not of this category, will not, we are convinced, turn a deaf ear to the earnest pleas that are made to them from time to time, and especially at this season of the ecclesiastical year, to enter into the spirit and symbolism of the liturgical ceremonies whose impressiveness they are called upon to enhance either vocally or instrumentally. A periodical reminder of the necessity of reviving their liturgical consciousness will not go unheeded by them, knowing, as they do, how easily this consciousness is dulled or even destroyed by the languor of routine. For their attentive perusal, we append here the following (translated) excerpt from Hofmiller's *Laiengedanken zum Unterricht in der Religion*: "Do we not possess a liturgy of inexhaustible richness, beauty, and depth of import; ceremonies of impressive meaning; and a powerfully developed tragedy, recurring annually and expressed in sacred language? How soul-stirring, this sudden hushing and triduan silence of the bells! And the slow-measured *Incipit lamentatio Jeremiae prophetae*,—is it not like a voice from out the desert-solitudes of thousands of years ago? Behold the altars,—what a sad picture of desolation! And now the great Passion begins, this oldest and most venerable of all sacred dramas. Petitions ascend to heaven for all stations in life and for protection against all manner of evils; for those held in bondage; for those wayfaring upon the seas; for travelers generally; for the sick; for heretics and schismatics; for Jews and Gen-

tiles. The cross is unveiled and raised aloft, and then, plaintively, the Savior's lament is sung into the very depths of our souls; *Popule meus, quid feci tibi?* Next we hear the hymns *Crux fidelis* and *Vexilla regis prodeunt*, hymns that were age-old even when the crusaders sang them. And now all is silence and mourning. But on the following morning, the very elements of nature are created anew, as it were, and blessed; the praises of the night of mystery are sung in *Hæc nox est* and *O vere beata nox*; and we hear the twelve great prophecies. Then, at the Gloria, the ban of silence is lifted from the earth, and the bells ring out the message which wrests the cup of death from the lips of the man in despair: "Christ is risen!"

A. L.

### An Echo of an Old Question

A recent phase in the discussion of the permissibility of women's singing in church choirs is set forth by the Buffalo *Echo* (issue of Feb. 10, 1921), as follows:

"It is quite impossible to write clearly enough for some people. There are those who even now are unable to understand the Roman decisions on the question of women participating in church choirs. The Philadelphia review, *The Catholic Choirmaster*, has found in the *Musica Sacra* of Milan a companion on the path of misconstructions. It hastens in its January issue to reproduce the latter's opinion of an English translation.

In this article the question is again mooted whether women may sing in church; from Spain, too, this question had been addressed anew to Rome. The decree *Valentina* answered simply by saying that in this matter the *Motu proprio*, the decree *Angelopolitana* and the decree *Neo Eboracen* should be observed. Note well, also the latter decree.

The article of the Milanese revue, it is true, quotes this answer, but strangely enough, wholly ignores in its comment the text of the decree *Neo Eboracen*, expressly mentioned therein, although this very decree gives the illuminating decision concerning our church choirs. As is known, it is this decree that deals expressly with mixed choirs in our organ lofts, whilst the decrees anterior to it concern themselves with other matters. By ignoring such an essential doc-

ument as this the truth will never be found in Milan nor in Philadelphia.

Questioned whether women may co-operate with the church choirs in our organ lofts, the decree *Eboracen* answers, by making the condition, that a proper separation be established between the male and female singers forming these choirs. The fact of this Roman answer cannot be denied and neither the logical conclusion therefrom, *to wit*: the permissibility of women co-operating with the church choir in the organ loft when the condition just mentioned is complied with. Now, how does the author of the Milanese article act in this case? In his comment he passes over the text of the decree *Neo Eboracen* in silence, and on the other hand desperately clings to the decree *Angelopolitana*, although the latter does not at all deal with the mixed choir in the gallery—neither in the query nor in the answer.

An answer to the Congregation of the Rites must be considered in the light of the question put to it, just because it is the answer to *this* question. Now, the query put to the Congregation was whether it is permissible that girls and women seated in the benches ('scamnis') in the church sing parts of the Mass, etc. The Congregation of Rites answers in the affirmative and on account of the query, which had mentioned specially assigned benches in the church, it makes ordinances in regard to the location of women and in regard to exclusive female singing, the latter especially in churches where there is choral recitation of the Divine Office.

Whilst, then, there is here no question of the mixed choir in the gallery, there is, however, question of it in the decree *Neo Eboracen*, and therefore, in our case, this decree must be considered, however disagreeable it proves to the opponents of the mixed choirs. But what the decision of this decree is, has been explained above and is sufficiently clear and known to anyone who is able and willing to see. This decree of a later date also throws light upon the *Angelopolitana* which is anterior to it; as they were published together in the *Decreta Authentica* a contradiction between the two cannot be admitted; there would be, however, such a contradiction if the interpretation of the decree *Angelopolitana* given by the Milanese article be right."

Note.—To enable the reader to judge for himself as to the correctness of the Buffalo *Echo's* contention that the Roman decree

*Angelopolitana*, referred to above, does not deal with the singing of women in our mixed gallery-choirs, we append here the translated text of the decree as well as of the question to which that decree was an answer:

Question: "Will it be lawful to permit girls and women, in pews set apart for them and separated from those occupied by men, to sing the unvarying parts of the mass (i. e., those contained in the Kyriele); or at least, outside of the strictly liturgical functions, to sing hymns or sacred songs in the vernacular?"

Answer (decree *Angelopolitana*): "Affirmatively to both questions, and according to the intention.

The intention is: first, that in the congregation men and boys should, as far as possible, take their part in the singing the divine praises, without excluding, however (and especially if men and boys be lacking) women and girls; and secondly, that where there is a canonical choir (and especially in cathedral churches), women *alone* (Italics ours.—L.) should not sing, except for a weighty reason recognized by the Ordinary; and always with care to avoid any unseemliness."

L.

### Der hl. Chrysostomus ueber den kirchlichen Gesang.

(Fortsetzung und Schluss.)

Vielleicht sind manche neugierig, was gesungen wurde; darüber finden sich da und dort Andeutungen. Gesungen wurden vor allem die Psalmen, schon ihres göttlichen Ursprunges wegen, denn "sie sind nicht von Menschen ausgedacht und gedichtet und zusammengestellt, sondern durch göttliche Erleuchtung; der betreffende Prophet hat nur seine Zunge dazu hergeliehen, deshalb heisst es: *Lingua mea calamus scribae velociter scribentis*. Die Feder aber schreibt nur das, was die Hand anschafft, von der sie gehalten und geleitet wird." (Homilie zu Ps. 44.) Wenn man sich nun auch nicht vorstellen darf, dass das gewöhnliche Volk die Psalmen auswendig konnte, so war es doch mit dem Inhalt der Psalmen gut vertraut; viel besser als unser jetziges Volk, das, um es gerade herauszusagen, keinen einzigen Psalm weiss, höchstens den in der Allerheiligen-Litanei ausgenommen. Dass aber in jener Zeit die Leute mit den Psalmen mehr vertraut waren, geht schon daraus hervor, dass

Chrysostomus vor dem Volke Homilien hielt, worin er die Psalmen Vers für Vers einzeln erklärte. Damit das Volk für eine derartige Predigt Interesse habe und demzufolge der Prediger derartiges vortragen kann — für interesselose oder gähnende Zuhörer oder für die Wände allein wird doch niemand reden wollen — ist vorauszusetzen, dass dem Volke der Text der Psalmen doch einigermaßen bekannt war, etwa sowie in unserer Zeit der Text der gewöhnlicheren Evangelien. Ohne diese Voraussetzung lassen sich Homilien über die Psalmen nicht leicht denken. Oder es soll's nur ein Prediger, meinetwegen im Dom, wo doch die gebildete Welt sich einfindet oder einfinden soll, er soll es nur probieren und eine Predigt halten über den Psalm *Memento Domine David* und Vers für Vers erklären und dann zum Schluss ankündigen: das nächstmal wird in gleicher Weise behandelt der Psalm 144: *Exaltabo te Deus meus rex* . . . wissen möchte ich, wie viele das nächste Mal sich einfinden. Und doch waren die Predigten des hl. Chrysostomus alle sehr besucht. Also dem Volke waren die Psalmen damals mehr bekannt als jetzt. Manche Psalmen konnten fast Alle auswendig, z. B. Ps. 140, welcher täglich beim Abendgebet verrichtet wurde; ebenso wohl auch den Morgen-Psalme: *Deus, Deus meus ad te de luce* . . . Aber dass man die meisten Psalmen auswendig gewusst hätte, das auch nicht. Beim Singen war es eingerichtet, dass das Volk nur kürzere, oft sich wiederholende Responsorien zu singen hatte, die natürlich allen geläufig waren, so wie jetzt die Antworten bei unseren Litaneien. So begann also z. B. der Diakon oder mehrere vom Clerus zu singen Ps. 41, V. 1: *Quemadmodum desiderat* . . . , das Volk wiederholte dies. Dann der Diakon: *Sitivit anima mea* . . . Das Volk wieder: *quemadmodum* . . . und so nach jedem einzelnen Vers. Andere Responsorien dieser Art waren: *Beatus vir qui timet Dominum* . . . ferner: *quoniam in saeculum misericordia ejus* . . . (zu Ps. 135.); ebenso: *Alleluja* (bei Ps. 104—106, 110—115. und anderen); desgleichen am Char-

samstag: *Lauda anima mea Dominum, laudabo Dominum in vita mea* (aus Psalm 145.) Diese Responsorien wurden manchmal bloß recitiert, andere Male aber gesungen (*cum cantu*). Und für Abwechslung war reichlich gesorgt. Und gerade auf Erläuterung dieser Verse verwendet Chrysostomus besonders viel Fleiß und Mühe, weil sie eben allen, auch den ärmsten Leuten geläufig waren. Un erhehend muss es gewesen sein, wenn der Diakon in der dem griechischen Wesen eigenen feierlichen Weise den Psalm begann und das Volk jedesmal in ebenso feierlichem und getragenen Ton sein *Quemadmodum desiderat* wiederholte. Grossartiger noch als das wogende Meer war es, wenn beim Gebete dieser gemischte Chorgesang der Leute jedes Alters und Geschlechtes wie eine gegen das Ufer schlagende Woge zu Gott emporstieg. So Basilius in seiner 4. Homilie über das Sechstageswerk. —S. R.

(Schluss.)

### Guide to Catholic Church Music.

(Continued from Caecilia, 1920, No. 4, p. 16.)

**Missa in honorem Sanctae Familiae**, for Soprano, Alto, Tenor and Bass, by Rev. F. T. Walter, St. Francis, Wis.

The Rev. author of this Mass is well known as an accomplished musician and we welcome this his **first opus** in our "Guide to Catholic Church Music." We hope the Author will feel encouraged by the hearty reception this effort will receive. The organ part is quite free and independent and organists who are somewhat afraid of sharps and flats will do well to look it over carefully. On the whole the Mass is dignified, of moderate difficulty and conforms to liturgical requirements. In reading the composition we found some parallel octaves which, however, can easily be corrected for a second edition. We are in favor of the adoption of this Mass into the official "Guide."

REV. B. DIERINGER,

For admittance:

REV. CH. BECKER,  
J. SINGENBERGER.

### Die Orgel bei einem Requiem.

1. Darf bei einem "Requiem" die Orgel gespielt werden? In früheren Zeiten war der Gebrauch der Orgel bei einem Amte für Verstorbene nicht gestattet; in der alten Ausgabe des *Caeremoniale ep.* ist dieses Verbot ausdrücklich enthalten.

In neuerer Zeit jedoch hat Rom diesbezüglich eine Milderung eintreten lassen und die neue typische Ausgabe (1886) des obgenannten liturgischen Buches erlaubt die Anwendung der Orgel bei einem Seelenamte, aber **nur zur Begleitung des Gesanges**. Vor- und Zwischenspiele sind demnach unstatthaft—*"silent organa, cum silet cantus."*

Die Responsorien bei der *Missa pro defunctis* dürfen mit der Orgel begleitet werden, jedenfalls aber ist es passender, dieselben ohne Begleitung choraliter zu singen.

2. Wie soll bei einem Requiem das Spiel der Orgel beschaffen sein? Ein Decret der "S. R. C." vom 31. März 1629 sagt, das Spiel der Orgel soll "einer mehr gedrückten, der Trauer entsprechenden Charakter" haben.

Das Amt für Verstorbene unterscheidet sich von der *Missa solemnis* durch die schwarze Trauerfarbe der Paramente und durch die grössere Einfachheit des Ritus. Dem zufolge soll nun auch der Gesang und das Spiel der Orgel Trauer ausdrückend und einfach sein. Es eignen sich daher bei einem Seelenamte für die Orgel nicht glänzende, hellklingende Register, sondern mehr ruhige, besonders 8-füssige Stimmen und tiefere Lagen.

3. Wie sollst du es in Zukunft machen? Ist es möglich die Gesänge (besonders empfehlenswerth der Choral) der Requiemesse ohne Orgelbegleitung gut auszuführen, dann möge die Orgel schweigen—das ist das vollkommenste. Brauchst Du jedoch die Orgel zur Unterstützung des Gesanges, so benütze sie dazu, aber lass die Vor- und Zwischenspiele weg und registriere so, dass das Spiel der Orgel ruhig und einfach sei.



